

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

REGULAR MEETING

Monday, March 9, 1998

Present: June Bailey, Lucy Burtnett, Bob Martz, M.S. Mitchell, Leon Robinson

Absent: Pat Consolver and William Sanders

Also Present: Tom Austin, Austin Miller, P.A.; Ron Hayworth, Larry Hoetmer, Vince Kendrick, Tim Martz, Mark Schimming, Tim Vanatta and Maryann Crockett (staff)

The notes from the public hearing of February 3, 1998, and minutes of the regular meeting of February 9, 1998, were reviewed and approved.

1. **Review and Approval of the 1997 Annual Report.** Board members briefly reviewed the report.

On motion by Mitchell, second by Bailey, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to approve the annual report as submitted and forward to the Citizen Participation Office.

2. **Discussion of Huntington Place Land Donation.** Tom Austin, Austin Miller, P.A. Mr. Austin began his presentation by referring board members to a map of Huntington Place, Lot 8, which he said was approximately one and one third acres in size. He said the configuration of the lot did not lend itself to residential development and that the area was originally scheduled for construction of a day care center or some other commercial development. He said the homeowners association purchased the lot at tax sale.

He said the association would like to donate the lot to the City for development of a park. He commented that the nearest park was Buffalo at Central and Maize. He said the association has been paying approximately \$5,000 per year in taxes and that there was approximately \$20,000 in specials due to be paid off in about seven years. He said the association would be willing to purchase playground equipment and other amenities if the specials were excused. He said the association was interested in negotiating whatever was economically feasible with the Park Department.

Director Vanatta said the City, in all probability, could not forgive the special taxes. Austin asked about the possibility of the association continuing to pay the specials. There was also mention of re-spreading the specials to the 134 members of the homeowners association.

Mitchell mentioned maintenance issues and compared the difference between the City's maintenance standards and the neighborhood standards, particularly with regard to mowing schedules and trash pickup.

Director Vanatta mentioned that current guidelines established in the park and open space master plan do not encourage acquisition of vest pocket type parks. He briefly reviewed the issues by stating that staff could not endorse taking on any special assessments; that the park area was too small in terms of maintenance issues; that funds from the City's matching playground equipment program could not be used if the park was privately owned; and concluded by reminding board members that the park would have to be considered a "public" park. Austin thanked the Board for their time and left the meeting.

3. **Discussion of correspondence from Orchard Park Neighborhood Association (OPNA).** Lucy Burtnett referred board members to the 2/17/98 correspondence from the OPNA. Director Vanatta stated that staff were prepared to report on the status of various issues raised in the letter.

- Vince Kendrick, Director of Recreation, reported that swimming pool hours would be extended until 7:30 p.m. and that staff was also exploring the possibility of offering water aerobics classes from 7:30 - 8:30 p.m. Director Vanatta added that staff has been researching ways to make the pools more "user friendly" and evaluating each pool location individually.
- Regarding the comment about more adult supervision at the recreation center, Kendrick said that two additional supervisory personnel would be assigned to the center for approximately twenty- five hours per week. June Bailey commented that the neighborhood association was willing to work with the Park Department and maybe provide volunteers, etc.
- Ron Hayworth, Superintendent of Parks, stated that there were guidelines regarding fencing around certain playground equipment. Bob Martz said that item was an attempt to deter vehicles (cars, bikes, etc.) from driving across the playground area. There was discussion regarding installation of bars or post and cable.
- Hayworth reported that two picnic tables had been delivered to the park. There was discussion concerning picnic areas established by "A Standard of Rules and Regulations Governing Parks and Recreation Facilities". Staff noted that items such as picnic ovens would not be added to the park.
- Hayworth reported that he had spoken to Public Works regarding the condition of the snow fences. He also requested that park patrons call maintenance if they see items in disrepair.
- Hayworth reported that the lamp post to the west of the building had been removed for safety reasons after it had become unstable as the result of the concrete base being hit by a car. He said staff was in the process of replacing the light and pole; however, repair will be delayed until receipt of the park facility consultant's report on park lighting.
- Hayworth reported that the broken glass had been removed from the park area. He commented that maintenance staff is usually at the park at least once a week; however, he encouraged park patrons to call maintenance directly or report items of this nature to recreation center staff.

- Hayworth stated that the park facility consultant's report would address security lighting around park areas.
 - Hayworth said the broken playground equipment that had been removed were the horse character swings that were recalled by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. He commented that equipment replacement is prioritized by areas that have no equipment for that age group first, followed by other areas as equipment and staff become available. Bob Martz asked if regular swings could be placed on the frames. Staff reported that the equipment could not be retrofitted. Martz commented that the neighborhood association has volunteered to help Park staff in any way possible.
 - Hayworth reported that the merry-go-round was designed with a slight tilt; that the bearings had been replaced in February, 1997; and that it had been inspected last week and was in good working order. He reported that the equipment had been partially painted in late 1995 and finished by volunteers in early 1996; however, he said staff could provide brushes and paint if volunteers were willing to undertake the task of painting the equipment.
 - There was considerable discussion concerning the "mud hole" in the northwest area of the park. Larry Hoetmer, Landscape Architect, reported that staff was exploring several possible solutions to the problem of the standing water. He said staff was in the process of taking elevation shots and investigating several options for consideration including establishing a drain inlet and tapping into a storm water sewer. Bob Martz stated that he had spoken with the surrounding neighbors, and they indicated there was minimal flooding in the area after a heavy rain prior to the curb being installed. There was discussion concerning constructing a curb cut and draining the water on to the street.
 - There was discussion concerning constructing a concrete pad for roller blading. June Bailey said that item was the result of children roller blading inside the recreation center. Vince Kendrick said the consultant study should address activities such as roller blading and skate boarding.
4. **Discussion of Yearly Fishing Fee at Watson Park.** Director Vanatta stated that currently, Watson Park charged the following fees for fishing: Age 12 and under free; Age 13 - 64 = \$2 per day; and \$65 and over = \$1 per day. He said staff recommended the establishment of an annual fee of \$100 for a fishing permit at Watson Park. He said this was designed to satisfy regular users who did not want to stop by the office every to obtain a fishing permit.

On motion by Robinson, second by Mitchell, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED that an annual permit fee of \$100 be established for fishing at Watson Park.

Kendrick also reported briefly on the following events/activities being planned by the Recreation Division:

Pepsi-Cola is sponsoring a coloring contest at Watson Park

There will be an Easter program at Watson Park

Pepsi-Cola is sponsoring 24 children and six adult chaperons from the Lynette Woodard

"Hoop It Up" program to the NCA Basketball Championship in Chicago

The River Kids program is moving to Watson Park
Disney Productions is sponsoring a program at Watson Park June 5-6
Play Tennis America and the National Junior Tennis League will be sponsoring tournaments at the Ralph Wulz Riverside Tennis Center
A west side baseball league is being established this year
The South Lakes Sports Complex will be completed this year
Barry Sanders donated \$30,000 to the City's football program
An additional \$100,000 in funding has been received from the general fund for "at risk" youth programs

June Bailey requested that flyers and notices of these special events be forwarded to the Citizen Participation Office (CPO) for inclusion in the Wichita Independent Neighborhood (WIN) monthly newsletter.

5. **Discussion of Golf Courses.** Requested by Bob Martz. Martz said he was interested in establishing a committee to review and update the "Policies and Performance Standards for Municipal Golf Course". He commented that he felt the golf professionals needed more clear and concise guidelines regarding conduct on the golf courses, speed of play and other golf issues. He suggested the committee consist of himself, the four golf professionals and Pete Frandsen, Golf Course Manager.

Director Vanatta briefly reviewed an incident that occurred recently at one of the municipal golf courses that resulted in a player being banned from all four courses for a period of one year. He said staff is interested in citizen safety, establishing a procedure for due process in case similar incidents occur in the future and providing the golf professionals methods to enforce a code of conduct on the golf courses.

On motion by Mitchell, second by Bailey, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to authorize establishment of a golf committee consisting of Bob Martz, the four golf professionals and Pete Frandsen, for the purpose of reviewing and updating the "Policies and Performance Standards for Municipal Golf Course".

OFF-THE-AGENDA ITEMS

1. **Correspondence from Madison West.** Lucy Burnett provided board members copies of a letter received from Madison West, concerned citizen, regarding the park survey being distributed by the facility consultant and other park issues .
2. **Report on Third Street Project Meetings.** Requested by M.S. Mitchell. Mitchell referred to the notes from the February 19, 1998, meeting with the Uptown Neighborhood Association provided with the agenda. Larry Hoetmer briefly reviewed items discussed at the meeting. He commented that there were several areas on the west side of Grove that were suitable for playground areas; however, the east side did not appear to have any areas that would be appropriate for play activity. Mitchell asked about the pedestrian bridges. Hoetmer reported that no additional bridges were planned at this time.

3. **Police Statistics regarding Alcohol Ordinance.** Requested by M.S. Mitchell. Mitchell referred board members to a copy of the arrest statistics provided by the Police Department. He requested that the police provide a follow-up report before the summer season to find out if the ordinance was assisting them control drinking in downtown parks and if the ordinance should be extended to other park areas. He said he would also like to find out if any of the arrests resulted in jail time.
4. **Land at North Meridian and the Bypass.** Requested by M.S. Mitchell. Mitchell referred board members to item # 17 of the public hearing notes regarding a vacant plot of land north of Meridian and the Bypass. He said the lot was located east of Meridian between Meridian and Glenn. He said he had spoken with the owner and that there may be a way to negotiate a donation based on vacation of an easement in the area.
5. **Memorials in Parks.** Requested by Lucy Burtnett. Burtnett stated that she has received several complaints from Riverside residents regarding a recently installed memorial along Wiley Avenue. She provided pictures of the memorial for board member review. There was discussion concerning memorial guidelines. Staff reported that current guidelines require that memorials be brick-size and flush to the ground. There was also discussion concerning moving the memorial to another location within the park or to another park area. Burtnett said she would be happy to sign a letter requesting relocation. Tim Martz stated that he would speak to the relatives and report back to the Board.
6. **Status of Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funds for the Riverside Park System Master Plan.** Requested by Lucy Burtnett. Burtnett reported that she had received information that funds for the Riverside Park project had been removed from the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget. Proposed CIP budgets dated 12/9/97 and 12/11/97 were compared and it appeared that funds had been reduced. Burtnett commented that she would be writing a letter to request additional information on the fund transfer.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:30 p.m.

Lucy Burtnett, President

ATTEST:

Maryann Crockett, Clerk